

FIGHT THE BITE!



THE ABCs OF WNV

WEST NILE VIRUS HOME & GARDEN MAINTENANCE

West Nile virus is a disease that is transmitted to humans by mosquitoes. Mosquitoes get it from feeding on infected birds. Mosquitoes breed in small pools of standing water. In drought conditions, birds and mosquitoes share the same few water sources, which can make the spread of West Nile virus worse. Eliminating standing pools of water around the home will help reduce the amount of mosquitoes and limit the spread of West Nile virus.



McLean County

Health Department

Partners in Prevention

www.mcleancountyil.gov/health

Animals Keep animal areas dry. Keep food and water bowls clean. Dogs and cats can become infected, but rarely become ill and do not spread the virus. There is a vaccine for horses.

Birdbath Hose out birdbaths weekly.

Building material Keep unused pipe inside or stored so that no water accumulates.

Chain-link fence Cover posts with metal or plastic caps since they are hollow pipes.

Containers Cover or turn upside down ashtrays, boxes, buckets, cans, cups, jars and pots so that they do not collect water.

Dawn/Dusk This is when mosquitoes are most active since they avoid the heat of day.

Dead birds Pick up dead birds with a shovel or gloves. Double bag in plastic and throw away. Do not handle directly in order to avoid exposure to the virus. Wash hands thoroughly afterwards.

DEET Apply repellent with DEET according to label instructions when outdoors, especially when working in the yard.

Drains Keep outdoor drains flowing freely.

Dripping water Fix leaky faucets, air conditioners and hoses.

Drought Drought conditions may help spread the virus since birds and mosquitoes share same few water sources.

Dumpsters Keep covered and remove any water inside and under dumpster.

Dunks Donut-shaped disks that kill mosquito larvae but are non-toxic to animals. Follow label instructions for safe use. Available at hardware and garden stores.

Flat roofs Inspect weekly to remove any puddles. Fix leaks from air conditioners and pipes. Keep gutters clear of debris.

Irrigation Do not over water. Eliminate any areas of excess standing water weekly.

Landscaping Remove plastic sheeting under bark or rock and replace with landscape fabric that prevents weeds yet allows water through.

Lawn ornaments Check for areas that hold water and drain weekly.

Lighting Check garden lights and eliminate water from tops of fixtures and from inside floodlights.

Playgrounds Drill drainage holes in tire swings and playground equipment that holds water.

Ponds Stock with mosquito eating fish.

Potted plants Do not over water plants. Empty saucers weekly or flush with garden hose. Drill small drainage holes in outdoor saucers.

Pools/Spas Keep maintained. Maintained pools and spas are not a concern since chemicals and filters kill any larvae.

Rain barrels Cover tightly with screening.

Rain gutters Clear debris from gutters. They can become breeding areas with standing water.

Recycling bins Cut top and bottom from tin cans and flatten. Invert glass jars. Crush soft drink containers. Store newspapers on end, not flat. Drill drainage holes in bottom of recycling bin.

Screens Install and maintain tight-fitting window and door screens. Repair any holes or tears.

Shrubby Trim and thin shrubs and bushy plants since they can be mosquito hiding areas.

Tool sheds Maintain roofs and eliminate water around foundation.

Tires Properly dispose of old tires. Drill drainage holes in tires used in retaining walls and in landscaping.

Trash cans Keep trash cans covered. Remove buckets and containers from around trash areas.

Trash Remove anything that can hold water including cans, cups, tin foil, plastic and paper.

Trees Eliminate water from dead tree stumps and hollow areas of live trees by filling with sand and flushing with water weekly.

Umbrellas Table umbrella and basketball bases can fill with water. Cap tightly, seal with duct tape or fill with sand and cover tightly.

Weeds Remove weeds, especially around areas close to water.

Wheelbarrows Store vertically or turned over to prevent water accumulation.